

# THE CONDOR

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Number 6



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A LAYSAN ALBATROSS FEEDING ITS YOUNG

Photographed by Walter K. Fisher

# THE CONDOR A MAGAZINE OF WESTERN ORNITHOLOGY.



Volume VI

November-December, 1904

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## The Black-headed Grosbeak

—(*Zamelodia melanocephala*)

BY WILLIAM LOVELL FINLEY

ILLUSTRATED BY HERMAN T. ROHLMAN



I SHALL always remember the black-headed grosbeak because it is one of the birds of my childhood. As long ago as I can remember, I watched for him in the mulberry trees and about the elderberry bushes when the fruit was ripe. I distinguished him from all others by his high-pitched, "quit! quit!" long before I knew his name. He is a common resident of California. When I came to Oregon, it was some time before I found him. Here he seldom if ever comes about the city, but he likes a quiet nook out in the hills, a place where the maples and alders form a thicket in the creek bottom.

For several years we have watched a pair of grosbeaks that spent their summer in a little thicket along Fulton Creek. I have no doubt the same pair has returned to the old nesting place for the last three or four years. It seems I can almost recognize the notes of their song. If our ears were only tuned to the music of the birds could we not recognize them as we recognize our old friends?

Last year I found three spotted eggs in a loosely-made nest that was placed in the dog-wood. This year the site was scarcely twenty feet from the old home. They came nearer the ground and placed the thin frame-work of their home be-

tween the two upright forks of an arrow-wood bush. We had never bothered them very much with the camera, but when they put their home right down within four feet and a half of the ground, it looked to me as if they wanted some pictures taken. It was too good a chance for us to miss.

When I waded through the ferns and pressed aside the bushes, the nest was full to the brim. Above the rim I could see the white fluff wavering in a breath of air. I stole up and looked in. The three bantlings were sound asleep. Neither parent happened to be near. I crawled back and hid well down in the bushes twelve feet away. The father came in as silent as a shadow and rested on the nest's edge. He was a beauty. He had a shiny black head, black wings crossed with bars of white, and the rich red-brown of his breast shaded into lemon-yellow toward the tail. He crammed something in each wide open mouth. The mother was right at his heels. She treated each bobbing head in the same way. Then,



MALE GROSBEAK ABOUT TO FEED YOUNG

with head cocked on the side she looked each youngster over, turning him gently with her head.

The weather was warm and it seemed to me the young grosbeaks grew almost fast enough to rival a toad-stool. Sunshine makes a big difference. These little fellows got plenty to eat and were where the sun filtered through the leaves and kept them warm. The young thrushes across the gully were in a dark spot. They got as much food but they rarely got a glint of the sun. They didn't grow as much in a week as the grosbeak babies did in three days.

I liked to sit and watch the brilliant male. He perched on the top branches of the fir and stretched his wings till you could see their lemon lining. He preened his tail to show the hidden spots of white. What roundelays he whistled "Whit-te-o! Whit-te-o! Reet!" Early in the morning he showed the quality of his singing. Later in the day it often lost finish. The notes sounded hard to get out,

or as if he were practising, just running over the keys of an air that hung dim in his memory. But it was pleasing to hear him practise; the atmosphere was too lazy to call for perfect execution.

The morning of July sixth, the three young birds left the nest, following their parents out into the limbs of the surrounding bushes. They were not able to fly more than a few feet but they knew how to perch and call for food. I never heard a more enticing dinner song. It was such a sweet, musical "tour-a-lee."

The parents fed their bantlings as much on berries as on worms and insects. Once I saw the father distribute a whole mouthful of green measuring worms. The next time he had visited a garden down the hillside, for he brought one raspberry in his bill and coughed up three more. Both birds soon got over their mad anxiety every time we looked at the youngsters. In fact, they soon seemed willing enough



FEMALE GROSBEAK AT NEST

to have the birdlings share the bits from our own lunch.

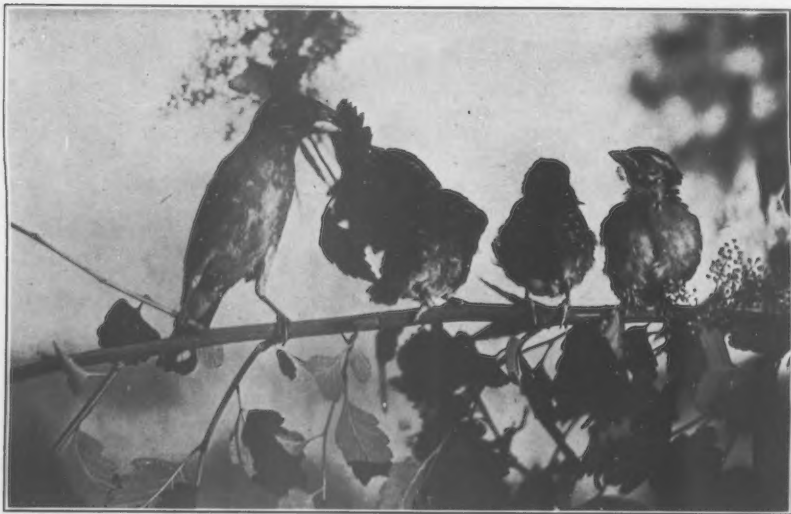
We spent the next two days watching and photographing. It took all the next morning, however, to find the three bantlings. The mother had enticed one down the creek to some hazel bushes. I watched her for two hours before I heard the soft whistle of the youngster. He perched on my finger and I brought him back to the nest. Another was found down in the thimbleberry bushes. This one, with the third up in the maple saplings over the nest, seemed to be in the keeping of the father.

After watching them all day we put them in a little isolated clump of bushes late in the afternoon, and when we went early the next morning they were still there but perched well up on the top limbs. The parents had become quite tame, and paid little attention either to the camera or to us. By the fourth day, how-



ever, the young grosbeaks were beyond the reach of the camera. Their wings had developed strength and they were beginning to hunt for themselves.

*Portland, Oregon.*



MALE GROSBEAK AND THREE YOUNG

Extracts from Some Montana Note-books, 1904

BY P. M. SILLOWAY

**W**ILLOW Thicket, Spring Creek, Lewistown, Mont. May 7.—A most distressing event occurred today in our usually quiet little grove, an event that occurs annually about this time, though, and tonight I am mourning the loss of embryonic offspring. It was a magnificent setting, although it was the traditional unlucky number thirteen. I might have known, experienced old magpie that I am, it would turn out unlucky for me, and I should have stopped at the number twelve, as I did last year; but now it seems that my treasured thirteen is to rest on a cottony bed beside my lost twelve of last year. Today that same voracious egg-hog, genus *Homo*, called Silloway, came wandering through the thicket. I was sitting quietly in my earthen cot, meditating on the numerous cares awaiting me as the proud mother of thirteen infants, when a rude shock at base of the small haw I had chosen for my home site caused me to flit from the nest. The *Homo* collector hurried up to my snug tenement, anchored himself among the many thorns which beset the surrounding branches, adjusted a cigar box in front of him, and began to remove one by one my precious clutch. There is no thorn without its rose, however, and even in my distress it was amusing to watch him try to pack thirteen eggs with cotton intended for only nine eggs, in a space intended for only nine eggs. He stretched every bit of cotton to its utmost capacity, poked unwrapped eggs into cavities between wrapped eggs, and finally worked his way down in an apparent condition of hilarious bewilderment. Here-



after I shall not try to exceed the bounds of magpie propriety by laying more than the five to nine allowed me by the books.

Morrison Ranch, Lewistown, Mont., May 25.—Strange that I cannot overcome being so startled at the report of a little gun! It would seem that a matronly Bartramian sandpiper of several seasons' experience should be accustomed to such a noise, but to this hour I am unable to control myself under such circumstances, and at last it has been my undoing. I was sitting snugly in my nest in a clump of grass which I found ample for my accommodation, apparently safe against the prying eyes of any Homo collector. Safe, I say, because that nightmare of sitting birds in this locality, Silloway, had been prowling around my nest several times, on chase of long-billed curlews I believe, and though he had passed within twenty feet of me, he had not spied out my crouching form in the herbage. At length, though, when I knew he was at a safe distance from my home, he fired a little gun at a longspur that was hovering near my nest. At the report I fluttered from the grass tuft, alighted some sixty feet away, and immediately realizing the magnitude of my mistake, attempted to elude him by "teetering" and waving my wings up and down. He did not give the least heed to my demonstrations, however, but went straightway to my turf, peered into the open top, and saw my four pointed treasures in their grassy bed. "A great find," he exclaimed. "Who would have thought that I should find my first set of Bartramian sandpiper in far away Montana, when I have searched hours and hours for it in old Illinois." Well, if it gave him so much pleasure to find the nest, he is welcome to the eggs. I can hunt another grass tuft, lay another set, and rear my brood in peace while he goes "hiking" after eggs at Flathead.

Borgh Grove, Lewistown, Mont., June 7.—My voice is always the cause of my undoing. It is well known that a red-naped sapsucker is not gifted with musical ability worth mentioning, but I am sure that my voice is pleasing enough to me and to my better half, and hence I am prone to exercise it much when the joys of domestic bliss impel me. When I flew screaming from our cozy cavity in our stout cottonwood this afternoon, I little dreamed that that bane of nesting birds in this region, Silloway, was looking around in the grove. He immediately appeared on the scene, and with no delay he located the entrance to the cavity. It had been made low, only twelve feet from the ground, and though I understand he is no climber, he shinned up to the place. I do not think he had come out for sapsucker eggs, though, for he seemed quite puzzled how to proceed in examining our newly-made establishment. It was in a live tree, you understand, for we sapsuckers prefer such for our nesting sites, the books say. He tried to work his way into the cavity, hacked at the entrance with his pocket knife, and at length appeared to give it up, for he slid down the trunk and went away. I hastened back to the nest and settled upon the six white eggs. Soon a rude shock aroused me, and upon flying out, screaming lustily as usual, I found the egg-hog armed with a big axe he had borrowed at a nearby house. There is no trying to evade an eggcrank, anyway, and though scolding angrily while he chopped open the cavity, I was powerless to prevent the despoiling of the nest. One after another the six handsome rosy-fresh eggs were rolled in cotton, placed carefully in a baking-powder box, and thus disappeared from my sight. "My first set of red-naped sapsucker," he murmured, "and six eggs too, regular beauties." I am glad they were quite fresh, for I had not become so "sot" on them as I should if it had been a week or two later. Even this evening I noticed a nice site for a new nest, and with only two or three days' trouble we can have as cozy a cavity as before. It doesn't pay to cry over lost eggs.

Crowley Pasture, Lewistown, Mont., June 14.—I have always chided Bob for singing so persistently near our nest, and now he has brought ruin upon us by his merry jingles. Like Adam of old, though, he insists that I alone am to blame. Bob always was an ardent suitor, however, and now that our home has been despoiled, he has an opportunity to retune his voice and enjoy another period of bobolink honeymoon, while I am establishing a new home in another part of the pasture. There was a certain fence post whereon Bob was accustomed to sing whenever I was in my nest, and it seems that one Silloway, a regular crank robber of birds' nests, became suspicious regarding the frequent singing of Bob at that particular place. At any rate, the collector kept watching that little corner of swampy meadow, and frequently searched through it for a nest of bobolink. To-day he entered the little corner when I was on my nest, and all the while Bob sat on that fence post and sang like the silly lover that he is, until from sheer ecstasy I fluttered from the tuft. The books say, I am told, that I always leave my nest by stealth and rise many feet away from it; but it is a failing of the books to interpret individual actions as general habits. Bobolinks do act thus on occasions, probably when suspecting danger at hand, but really I did not know that the arch-enemy was near, and somehow I fluttered right out of the tuft. He went straight to the spot, and looking down among the open grass blades, saw my three eggs with two that Mrs. Cowbird had intruded upon me. "Thanks, Mrs. Bobolink," he cried, "thanks for small favors. I had rather my first set of bobolink had been larger. Why did you stop with three eggs, anyway, when the books credit you with five to seven?" And come to think of it, why did I stop with three? I suppose that in making room for Mrs. Cowbird's imposition, I found our snug cot comfortably filled and so contented myself with the smaller number. If he looks over the other portion of the meadow, he will find several nests of seven, without cowbird's, and I will stake my reputation that he will find them before many hours. (This prediction of Mrs. Bobolink was verified before many days. P. M. S.)

Crowley Swamp, Lewistown, Mont., June 17.—Why on earth does a grown-up man want to grope around in a cat-tail swamp, wading to his middle in mud and water, and frightening us poor soras half to death? Why does he? I used to wonder at it, but tonight I can answer the question from bitter experience. He wants our eggs, of course. Now I have nested in this little pond for the past four years, and have seen that egg-crank Silloway wander around here each season, but some way or another he never seemed to think of entering my chosen domain. Today, however, when he went past he eyed the rushes as if he intended to invade them, but passed on as usual, and I settled myself to a forenoon of enjoyment in my snug basket of rushes. At length I heard a crashing and splashing which came nearer and nearer, and before I was aware of it the nest robber was brushing against my grass tuft. Of course I flew out with a scream of fright, and in a moment he was gloating over my fourteen eggs arranged so nicely in two layers. "Another good find, and a good record made," uttered the collector, "for the sora nests not only in Montana but in Fergus county and within sight of Lewistown." Thus I lost my eggs. I'll warrant me that he had a hard time preparing those eggs for his cabinet, for the last one had been laid some days, and I even expected some of them to begin to hatch tomorrow. Well, if he enjoys it, let him take them. I'll lay another lot. It will only take me two weeks. (The eggs were found to be a trifle incubated, as Mrs. Sora leads us to infer, but they made a nice set at any rate. P. M. S.)

*Lewistown, Montana.*

## Albatross Pictures

BY WALTER K. FISHER

ILLUSTRATED WITH PHOTOGRAPHS BY THE AUTHOR

I have ventured to reprint the illustrations of my article in the January, 1904, *Auk*, "On the Habits of the Laysan Albatross," hoping that the pictures will be of interest to those readers of *THE CONDOR* who do not regularly see our standard journal of ornithology. The following brief synopsis of the pictures is not intended to be an exposition of the habits of that most entertaining bird, —*Diomedea immutabilis*, but rather a scenario, as it were, of its somewhat theatrical



FIG. 1. ROOKERY OF LAYSAN ALBATROSSES

performances. Something has already been said concerning the general aspects of the bird life on Laysan, in the May and July numbers of *THE CONDOR*.

The first picture shows a portion of one of the larger rookeries of *Diomedea immutabilis*, near the southern end of the islet. Here, in years gone by, Japanese laborers have cleared away all the loose phosphate rock leaving a level area many acres in extent. The albatrosses have entirely preempted the site. In the distance may be discerned the sandy slope of the island, corresponding to the sides of a meat platter, which the atoll greatly resembles in general form. In the foreground is seen loose phosphate rock and one of the characteristic bushes of the island, *Chenopodium sandwicheum*, a sort of pigweed. Figure 2 is one of the young albatrosses in the foreground of 1. Most of the birds in sight are young, since the photograph was taken in the morning before the adults had returned from the

<sup>a</sup>With the exception of the frontispiece these illustrations are from plates kindly loaned me by Dr. J. A. Allen and Mr. Frank M. Chapman, editors of *THE AUK*.



FIG. 2. PORTRAIT OF YOUNG LAYSAN ALBATROSS

fishing grounds. Note the characteristic position of the young bird, teetering back on its heels.

The gonies are sprinkled rather thickly all over the island, on the windy slope facing the sea, on the inner sandy slopes among the tall grass, and around the



FIG. 3. NEAR THE LAGOON, LAYSAN



FIG. 4. A CORNER IN ONE OF THE COLONIES



FIG. 5. AMONG THE LAYSAN ALBATROSSES

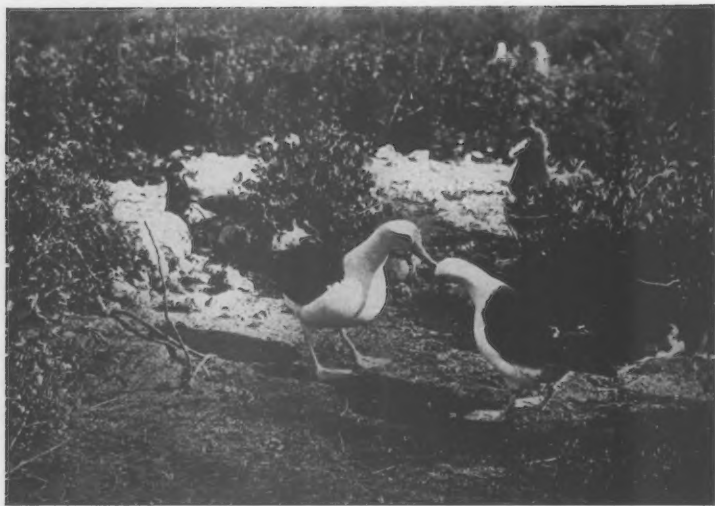


FIG. 6. FIRST STAGE IN DANCE, FENCING

central lagoon in the level portion of the islet. Figure 3 is a small section of the great colony which encircles the lagoon. This photograph was taken in the afternoon, practically all of the adults having returned. To the left will be seen a

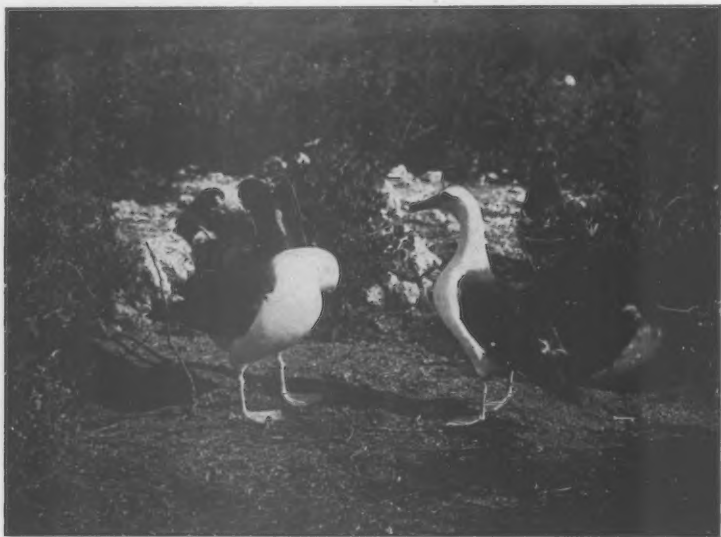


FIG. 7. SECOND STEP IN DANCE



youngster sitting in one of the bowl-like hollows which serve the albatrosses as nests. Two others, unoccupied, will be seen directly over the nestling's head. The young bird near the center, middle distance, also occupies a 'nest' and belongs to the two old birds standing near. Figure 4 is a corner in one of the colonies near a little brackish pond. The young bird in the foreground is practising its wings and is just beginning to stand upright. This picture was taken soon after the young had been fed, about ten in the morning. Both old and young rest at this time, and the adults frequently go to sleep with the bill and one eye hidden by the wing.

Figure 5 demonstrates the remarkable indifference exhibited by the birds to human presence. The writer is making some small noise to attract the bird's attention. At the left two birds are about to commence a dance. Note the absolute fearlessness of the young as shown by their pose. It was near this spot that an



FIG. 8. LAST STAGE IN DANCE—ONE SINGING, THE OTHER SNAPPING BEAK

old albatross became greatly interested in the bright aluminum top of my tripod, which it carefully examined from all sides. Finally it tested the cap with its beak, and appeared much surprised, yet pleased, with the jingling sound, repeating the experiment until satisfied.

The gonies indulge in a curious dance, which probably originated during the courting season, but which now seems to be practised all through the year for the sake of amusement. That the habit is very old and deep-seated is proved by the fact that such widely different species as *Diomedea nigripes* (Laysan) and *D. irrorata* (Galapagos Is.) likewise indulge in the diversion. Figures 6, 7, 8 and 9 are successive steps in the performance. Two birds approach one another, bowing profoundly and stepping heavily. They swagger about each other nodding and courtesying solemnly, then suddenly begin to fence a little, crossing bills and



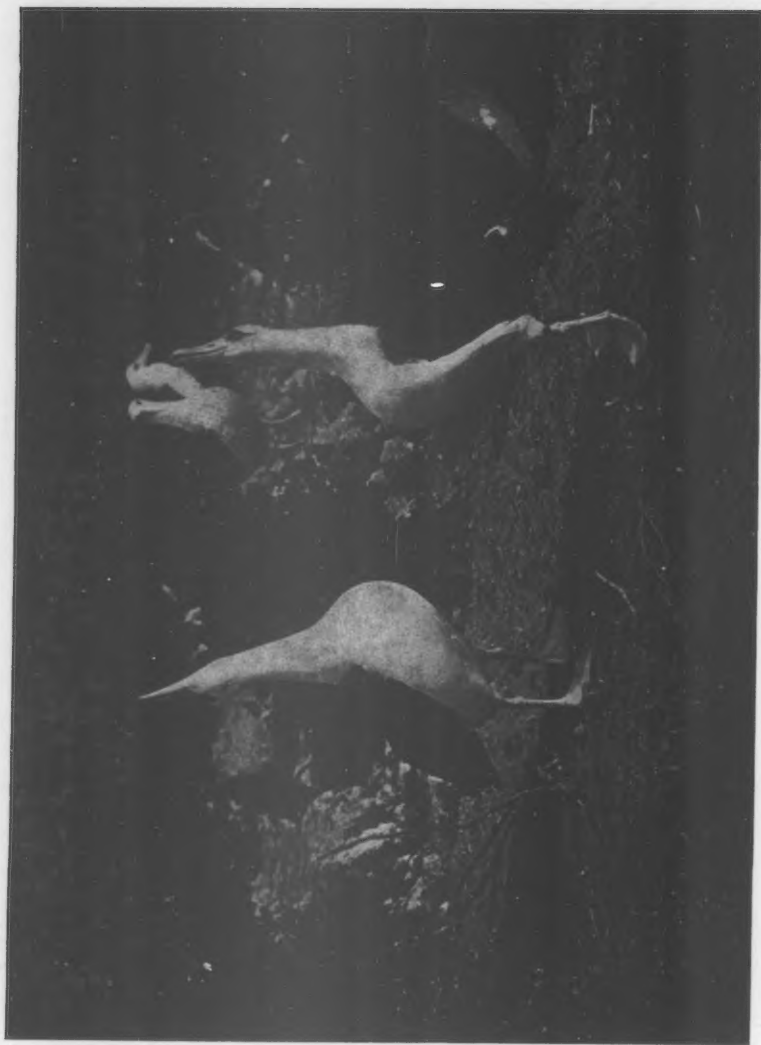


FIG. 9. FINALE OF ALBATROSS DANCE—THE DUET



FIG. 10. YOUNG ALBATROSS ASKING FOR FOOD

whetting them together, sometimes with a whistling sound, meanwhile pecking and dropping stiff little bows. (Fig. 6.) All at once one lifts its closed wing and nibbles at the feathers beneath, or rarely, if in a hurry, quickly turns its head.



FIG. 11. OLD BIRD STARTING TO DISGORGE

The partner during this short performance assumes a statuesque pose and either looks mechanically from side to side or snaps its bill loudly a few times. (Fig. 7.) Then the first bird (to the left of the picture) bows once and pointing its head and beak straight upward, rises on its toes, puffs out its breast, and utters a prolonged nasal *Ah-h-h-h* with a rapidly rising inflection, and with a distinctly 'anserine' and 'bovine' quality, quite difficult to describe. While this song is being uttered, the companion loudly and rapidly snaps its bill. (Fig. 8.) Sometimes both birds raise their heads in the air, and either one or both utter the curious groan. (Fig. 9.) Figures 6, 7, and 9 are of the same pair of birds. Three sometimes engage in the dance, one dividing its attention between two until it tires and finally deserts one of the partners, to devote its entire attention to the other. If a person bows to the birds while they are engaged in "cake-walking" or soon after they have finished, they will usually bow in return and walk around in a puzzled sort of way. It would seem that whenever they behold anything bowing, a sort of reflex stimulus is set up in their own bodies.



DIOMEDEA NIGRIPES PUNISHING STRANGE YOUNG

The gonies depend entirely upon squids for food. That the number of these cephalopods in the surrounding waters must be very great is suggested by the fact that the approximate million of albatrosses on the island consume, allowing from one-half to one and one-half pounds of food a day to each individual, between 250 and 600 tons daily. As the squids are nocturnal or crepuscular in habits the albatrosses fish after dark, most probably from just preceding dawn till light. They return to the island, from long distances, and feed the young anytime during the early forenoon. The old bird alights near the impatient and greedy nestling, who immediately takes the initiative by waddling up and pecking or biting gently at her beak. (Fig. 10.) She now stands up, and with head lowered and wings held loosely at the sides regurgitates a bolus of squids and oil. (Fig. 11.) Just as she opens her beak, the young one who has been standing ready inserts its own *crosswise*, and skillfully catches every morsel, which it bolts with evident relish. (Frontispiece.)

Albatrosses have a habit of maltreating their neighbors' children, particularly just after they have fed their own young and while the latter are still annoying them by petitioning for more. The old bird having repeated the process shown in the illustrations some eight or ten times finds herself pumped quite empty. She now pecks back at her nestling, or runs off and trounces some neighboring young, provided the parents are absent. Figure 12 shows a black-footed albatross (*Diomedea nigripes*), a species which lives only on the beaches near the water, wooling and mauling a nestling. Its own young is seen at a little distance.

The albatrosses pursue their varied occupations on Laysan for ten months of each year, and during September and October spread far and wide over the north Pacific for a short vacation.

Stanford University, California.

### An Early Notice of Philippine Birds

BY RICHARD C. MCGREGOR

IN the library of the Ethnological Survey in Manila is a curious old set of quarto volumes containing "A Collection of Voyages and Travels"<sup>a</sup> to all parts of the world, including accounts of shipwrecks, fights with pirates, and other adventures by land and sea. In the fourth volume is given the narrative of Dr. John Careri,<sup>b</sup> "A Doctor of the Civil Law, well provided with Money to make him acceptable in all Parts," who through crosses at home was led to make a journey round the world. He left Italy, his native land, in 1693 and returned in 1699. His quaint observations on all manner of things in the countries he visited are entertaining if of no more value. He spent some time in the Philippines during the years 1696 and '97. His account of the birds seems to be worth reproduction as containing very early notices of several well known species. The account of the birds begins on page 454 as follows:

"Among the Birds of the Islands the *Tavon*<sup>c</sup> deserves to have special Mention

<sup>a</sup> A | Collection | of | Voyages and Travels. | Some now first Printed from Original | Manuscripts. | Others Translated out of Foreign Languages, and now | first published in English. | To which are added some few that have formerly appeared in English, but do now for their Excellency | and Scarceness deserve to be Reprinted. [rule] In four Volumes. [rule] With a General PREFACE, giving an Account of the NAVIGATION, from its first Beginning to the Perfection it is now in, &c. [rule] The whole Illustrated with a great Number of Useful Maps and Cuts, all Engraven on Copper. [rule] The Authors contain'd in this Volume, see over Leaf. [rule] Vol. IV. [rule] London: | Printed by H. C. for A. W. N. SHAM and JOHN CHURCHILL at | the Black-Swan in Pater-noster-Row, MDCCIV. Although projected in four volumes there were added four more making eight in the set examined. The title pages differ in some of the later volumes.

<sup>b</sup> A Voyage round the World, by Dr. John Francis Gemelli Careri, containing the most remarkable Things in Turkey, Persia, India, China, the Philippine-Islands and New Spain. Translated from the Italian. (pp. 1-605) It is not stated where this was first published. Perhaps it was never printed in the original.

<sup>c</sup> *Megapodius cumingi* Dillwyn. Of the family Megapodidae or mound-builders, including 7 genera all confined to the Oriental and Australian Regions. The genus *Megapodius*, according to Sharpe, contains 17 species, distributed from the Mariannes to Australia. Six species are found in New Guinea, but five of these range to other islands. *M. cumingi* is the only species recognized in the Philippines where it occurs on nearly all the islands. Both from the name given and the description of the peculiar nesting habits there is no doubt that our author refers to this bird. The bird is very generally called "Tabon," but "v" and "b" being more or less interchangeable in the native dialects will account for his calling it "Tavon." It has nothing to do with a "Sea Fowl" as we understand that term. It is plainly colored and might be described as black. The neck and legs, however, are not long tho't does have very heavy feet and long strong claws. The description of the nesting habits is accurate enough but the nests are by no means always near the water and it is doubtful if anything short of a tidal wave would trouble them. The wonderful embryology, as described, it is needless to say is a pure fabrication. The tabon probably nests throughout the year. I have taken eggs in May and in October.

made of it, as well for its Quality, as because it is not known whether there are any of the Species elsewhere. It is a Sea Fowl and Black. As to its size it is less than a Hen but has a long Neck and Legs, and lays its Eggs in a light Sandy Ground. These Eggs are wonderful; for besides their being as large as a Gooses, when Boil'd there is very little White found in them, but all Yolk, yet not so well tasted as a Hens. The strangeness of them is, that contrary to all others, when the chickens are hatch'd the Yolk appears whole and sweet as it was at first, with the Chickens Beak fast, and without any White. By this it appears that it is not always true, that the generative Virtue of the Seed makes the Yolk Fruitful, and that in this Case the Yolk serves for the same use as *Placenta Uterina* does to an Infant.

"The Chickens roasted before they are fledg'd prove as good as the best Pigeons. The *Spaniards* very often eat the Chicken and the Yolk of the Egg together in the same Dish. The old bird is eaten by the *Indians*, but is tough. The Hen lays about 40 or 50 Eggs in a Trench near the Sea and covers them with Sand. For this reason it is call'd *Tavon*, which in the language of the Islands signifies to cover with Earth. There the heat of the Sand hatches them, and the Chickens feed on the Yolk, till they gather Strength to break the Shell, throw up the Sand and get out. Then the Hen which keeps about the neighboring Trees, runs about them making a Noise, and the young ones hearing her labor the harder to get out to her. This is no less wonderful than what the Scripture says of the Ostriches Eggs, *Job 39*. We see the disposition of Providence, in giving this Bird that Instinct to bury its Eggs so deep, and the Chicken such long Claws, as to make its way. They make nests in *March, April and May*, like the *Halcions* the Antients make mention of; because at that time the Sea is Calmest, and the Waves do not swell so high as to spoil them. The Sailors go in quest of them along the shore, and where they find the Sand has been thrown up they open it with a stick, where they sometimes find Eggs and sometimes Chickens, which are equally Valuable and Nourishing.

"There is also a sort of Turtle-Dove with gray Feathers on the Back, and white on the Breast, in the midst whereof is a red Spot, like a Wound with the fresh Blood upon it.<sup>d</sup>

"The *Colin*<sup>e</sup> is a Fowl as big as a Black-Bird, Black and Ash colour'd; without any Feathers on its Head, but instead of it a Crown of Flesh. That is yet stranger which the *Spaniards* call *Paloma-Torcas*<sup>f</sup>; it is of several colors, as Gray, Green, Red and White on the Breast, with the same Spot like a Wound on the Breast; and the Beak and Feet Red. \* \* \* \*

"The *Salangan*<sup>g</sup> is a strange Bird of the Islands of *Calamianes, Xolo* and others. It is as big as a Swallow, and builds a little Nest on the Rocks over the Sea-shore.

<sup>d</sup> *Phlogenas luzonica* (Scopoli). The plumage is much as described and very striking, the breast spot looking exactly like a blood-stained wound. The genus contains about 30 species of very beautiful ground doves inhabiting the islands of the Australian Region. Five species are found only in the Philippines.

<sup>e</sup> *Sarcops calvus* Linneus. A peculiar starling, the single species being confined to the Philippines. The word "*Colin*" or more properly "*Coling*" is the native name in many parts of the Islands at the present time.

<sup>f</sup> The "*Paloma-Torcas*" is doubtless *Phlogenas luzonica* referred to above or possibly some other species of the genus. There is no other genus of dove in the Islands which has this peculiar breast mark.

<sup>g</sup> *Salangana francica* (Gmelin). The author is quite correct in stating that this is one of the edible nest swifts. Seven species have been recorded from the Philippines.

cleaving to the Rocks as the Swallows (p. 455) do to the Wall. These are the so famous Birds Nests, whereof we have spoke in the foregoing Volume<sup>a</sup>.

"The *Herrero*<sup>i</sup> is a green Bird, as big as a Hen. Nature has furnish'd it with such a large and hard Beak, that it bores the Bodies of Trees to build its Nest. From the Noise it makes at this Work, which is heard at a great distance, the *Spaniards* took occasion to give it this name of *Herrero* or Smith. Others think it was so call'd for an knowledge of an Herb, which lay'd upon Iron breaks it; for it is known by experience that the Hole on (sic) the Tree being cover'd with an iron Plate to save the Young that are in the Nest, it seeks out this Herb, and laying it on the Plate, breaks it, and so clears the way; but I will not vouch for the Truth hereof.

"There is another rare bird call'd *Colo-Colo*<sup>j</sup>, little less than an Eagle, Black, and half Fish half Bird, for it equally dives under Water, and flies in the Air. It overtakes any Fish and kills it with its Beak which is half a Yard long. The Feathers are so close that as soon as out of the Water it shakes them dry.

"In the Island of *Calamianes* there are abundance of Peacocks<sup>k</sup>. The wild Mountain Cocks<sup>l</sup> supply the want of Pheasants and Partridges, and well dress'd and excellently tasted. The Quails<sup>m</sup> are half as big as ours, and have a red Beak and Feet.

"In all the Islands at all times there are green Birds call'd *Volanos*<sup>n</sup> and severaj sorts of Parrots<sup>o</sup>, and white *Cacatuas*<sup>p</sup>, which have a Tuft of Feathers on their Head. \* \* \* \*

"The *Oydor* or Judge, *D. John Serra*, show'd me another dead Bird that had most beautiful Feathers, as big as a Black-Bird, brought him from the Island of *Borneo*, where it was taken. It had no Feet, but only great Wings to bear it up, and is therefore call'd the Bird of Paradise<sup>q</sup>. *F. Combes* in his History of the Island of *Mindanao*, says there are such there."

Manila, P. I.

<sup>a</sup> The following is the passage referred to: "The Birds Nests are taken on the Coast of *Cochinchina*, the Islands of *Borneo*, *Calamianes*, and others of the Archipelago of *S. Lazaro*, where they are built upon inaccessible Rocks, by certain Birds like Swallows, so artificially that they are eaten steep'd in warm Water, to take out any Feathers there may be in them. It is not known to this Day, whether they are made from Clay, or of what the Bird fetches from its Stomach; but they are of great nourishment, and taste like the *Italian Vermicelli*." (page 374).

<sup>i</sup> I cannot make this out unless it is one of the hornbills (*Bucerotidae*). None of them, however, are green and I doubt if they dig their own nesting holes. Five genera are known from the Philippines, three of which are confined to the group, viz: *Hydrocorax*, 3 species; *Gymnolaimus*, 1 species; *Penelopides*, 6 species.

<sup>j</sup> *Plotus melanogaster* (Gmelin) probably. The single species found in these Islands ranges over the greater part of the Oriental Region and into Celebes. I have never heard the name "Colo-Colo." The bird is known to the natives as "Casili."

<sup>k</sup> None has been recorded from the *Calamianes*.

<sup>l</sup> *Gallus gallus* Linnaeus. The wild chicken, or jungle fowl is common in most of the Islands and abundant in the *Calamianes*.

<sup>m</sup> Four species of quails have been recorded from the Archipelago, all of them minute compared with our American partridges. I know of none with red bill and feet.

<sup>n</sup> I don't know the "*Volano*."

<sup>o</sup> Four genera of parrots are present in the Philippines. *Prioniturus*, 7 species; *Tanygnathus*, 3 species; *Bolbopsittacus*, 3 species; genus peculiar to Philippines; *Loriculus*, 8 species.

<sup>p</sup> *Cacatua haematurpygia* (P. L. S. Mueller). *Cacatua* contains 17 species, distributed over the Oriental Region, except the present species which is common in most of the Philippine Islands.

<sup>q</sup> These birds were long thought to be without feet as all the early specimens were obtained from nations who cut off the feet. None of this family has ever been found in *Mindanao* tho the myth that they occur there still persists.





DR. LEONHARD STEJNEGER

It was concerning one of Dr. Leonhard Stejneger's best known works that Dr. R. Bowdler Sharpe wrote the following: "I must emphatically state my conviction that, with the exception of some of Professor Elliott Coues's essays, there has never been a popular work on birds so well conceived as the 'Aves' volume of the 'Standard Natural History,' or one which, professedly popular in its aims, contains such an amount of sterling new and original work. It differs, moreover, from most recent schemes in giving diagnostic characters for every Order and Family, and is thus entitled to foremost rank as an original work."<sup>a</sup> The same year (1885) that the volume on 'Birds' of the Standard Natural History appeared, Dr. Stejneger's exhaustive treatise on the Birds of the Commander Islands and Kamtschatka was published. Previously the well-known *Analecta Ornithologica* was commenced in *The Auk*, and during the years following, the Review of the Birds of Japan came out in instalments in the Proceedings of the U. S. National Museum; and in the same publication appeared a number of articles on Hawaiian Birds. Dr. Stejneger has been responsible for a very extensive list of papers, many of them on the more difficult phases of ornithological investigation. His work has been characterized by unusual thoroughness and accuracy, and has undoubtedly greatly influenced, at least in America, our present conceptions of the relationships and classification of birds. During the past decade Dr. Stejneger has devoted a large part of his time to herpetology.

<sup>a</sup> A Review of Recent Attempts to Classify Birds. By R. Bowdler Sharpe, L.L. D., F. R. S. Budapest, 1891, p. 24.



## Nesting of the Western Golden-crowned Kinglet in Western Washington

BY J. H. BOWLES

ON the 19th of May, 1902, my attention was attracted to a dark spot on the under side of a fir limb at an elevation of forty feet above the ground. It was near the top of a young tree about five feet from the trunk, and my disappointment may be better imagined than described when I discovered it to be a ball of moss and feathers, open at the top and containing nine newly hatched young of *Regulus satrapa olivaceus*. This being my first positive breeding record for this bird my oological ambition became centered on securing a nest with eggs, and the season of 1903 was largely devoted to that purpose greatly to the neglect of other much deserving species. Time and again I thought I had succeeded, but only to find the usual cluster of our exceedingly common hanging moss, or at best a decoy nest, for these kinglets are nearly as fond of building extra nests as are so many of the wren family.

To give the readers of THE CONDOR an idea of the difficulties of the undertaking before me, a description of the nesting grounds is necessary. While the kinglets are not particularly rare, the localities where they may be found are the immense stretches of great firs that cover large portions of our dry prairie country. The only intimation, as a rule, of their presence is their faint squealing call-note that comes from somewhere high overhead in the dense foliage, the birds themselves being so small that it is almost an impossibility to get a sight of them. With this discouraging prospect I started in on the present season of 1904, and my reward came most unexpectedly, on the evening of April 25. My brother and I were returning from a successful trip after nests of the Audubon warbler, having taken two handsome sets of four, and were strolling along the edge of a stretch of fir timber several square miles in extent. Kinglets being in my mind as usual, my attention was drawn to a spot among the fir branches which, even in the growing dusk, looked a trifle different from any of the surroundings. It proved to be a most promising looking kinglet nest, but, being twenty feet from the ground and fifteen feet out under an immense branch, making a close examination was impossible. As there were no birds around we decided it was the customary decoy and so left it, but after two days had passed the uncertainty became too much for our nerves and we again visited it, armed this time with a hundred feet of rope. Curiously enough it was impossible to see the nest in the bright sunlight until we were directly under it, so well did it harmonize in coloring with its surroundings, although in the evening it was faintly discernable at a distance of sixty feet. When we arrived within a short distance our hopes rose a trifle to see a small gray object leave the vicinity of the nest and disappear like a flash in the surrounding maze of branches. Climbing up the tree some forty feet above the nest my brother securely fastened one end of the rope, and, coming down to a level with the nest, attached the rope chair and I, on the ground, pulled him out to the nest. Seldom has anything been more welcome to me than when he called down, "It's full of eggs." We stayed around the tree for an hour, during which time the male *Regulus* was extremely shy, but the female after a while became accustomed to us and would return and get into the nest when my brother was within three feet of it. The nest, like all the others I have seen, was most insecurely fastened among the small needle-covered twigs about three inches under the limb. It is an exceedingly bulky structure, considering the size of the bird, measuring externally  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches in depth by 16 inches in circumference. The cavity is small though

rather more shallow than might be expected, being a scant two inches deep by one and three-quarter inches wide. In construction the materials used form a very attractive conglomeration of various kinds of green mosses, feathers and hair, heavily lined with small downy feathers and squirrel and rabbit hair.

The eggs, which are eight in number, are of a subdued cream-white ground color with the faintest suggestion of a cloud of tiny brown spots around the larger end. In measurement there is scarcely any variation, the average being .57 by .43 inches. They were neatly placed in the nest, being arranged in a single layer extending up the sides of the nest so the body of the bird fitted in their midst.

My second occupied nest for this year was found on the third of June in much the same kind of location as the first one. Its large size convinced me that it was not a decoy and, supposing of course the young had long since left, I climbed the



NEST OF WESTERN GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLET

tree with the purpose of cutting off the limb and securing the nest as a specimen. I had my knife out when the bird suddenly appeared and, on seeing me darted away so quickly that I was only able to see that she held something in her bill. Young ones, thought I in disgust, so left the nest and did not again visit it until June 17, this time again with my brother and the rope in case of an addled egg. As we were making preparations down below one of the birds appeared with a small green worm in its mouth and flew to the nest and stayed there. This convinced us that the nest had contained eggs when I first found it, but there was still the possibility of the addled egg so my brother started up with the rope to make the best of a bad mistake. Such was my annoyance that I threw a dead stick up close to the nest, causing two birds to flutter out of it. I supposed them to be the old one just seen and a full grown young one, so paid no further attention to them being busy with my end of the rope. However it is the unexpected

that often happens and luck was again with us to an unusual extent, for the nest contained nine beautiful eggs varying from fresh to about half incubated. The birds were somewhat more shy than those in the case of the first nest, never coming nearer than six feet but squeaking continually.

This nest closely resembles the first one, but is a trifle larger, measuring sixteen and a half inches in circumference by four inches in depth. The inner dimensions, however, are slightly smaller, measuring one and a half by one and a half inches. It was suspended from the lower side of the branch, most insecurely as usual, fifteen feet from the trunk of the tree and eighteen feet from the ground. The eggs are quite different in coloring from those of the first set, the ground being a perceptible reddish white strongly clouded about the larger ends with fine red-brown dots. Several have a fine line of the same color, as if made with a pen. They are very slightly larger than the first set, measuring .60 by .42 inches.

The only other occupied nest found was situated fifty feet up in a fir tree in the middle of a large grove. In size and construction it is similar to the two above mentioned, but the young had only recently vacated it. Curiously enough they had scarcely damaged it at all.

To try to arrive at any definite conclusions concerning the nesting habits of these birds would be hardly wise, owing to lack of sufficient data, but let us hope to hear from others on the subject. However, it seems extremely likely that my nests with eggs were unusually low ones, the fifty foot one being nearer the average as the birds are almost always high up in the trees. This seems the more probable since both my brother and I had found nests that had fallen to the ground that could not have come from lower than sixty feet, and possibly were built at a much greater height.

That they build a great many decoy nests is beyond a doubt. Indeed I have found two in one tree. I watched a bird working on one of these nests in the middle of July but could find no trace of an occupied nest in the vicinity. These extra nests are built of the same material as the occupied nests, but are not so neat in their construction nor are they so large.

The texture of the egg shell is the most delicate that I have ever seen, not even excepting eggs of the hummers, the drill sinking into the shell at the slightest touch. In spite of such a nerve-destroying process, however, I am happy to say that all seventeen of the eggs are prepared in perfect condition.

I feel positive that two broods are reared in a season, on account of the dates of my nests as well as owing to the fact that old birds with their troops of young may be seen at intervals between the middle of May and the first of July.

*Tacoma, Washington.*

### A Set of Abnormally Large Eggs of the Golden Eagle

BY C. S. SHARP

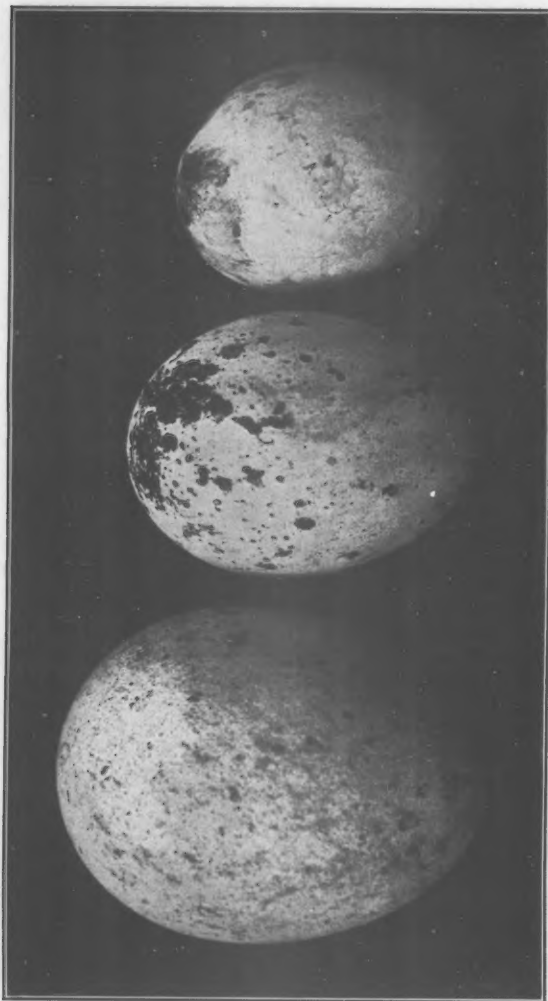
A FEW miles west of the Escondido Valley, and forming one of the outlets to the coast, is a picturesque canyon, officially known, I believe, as Aliso Canyon; locally by every resident within a mile of it and among the unregenerate youth of this place as "Spook" Canyon, from the fact that the spiritualists of Escondido and vicinity hold an annual camp meeting in its groves. Through

it runs the county road and also, in winter, the flood waters of what we are pleased to call the Escondido River.

The canyon is of varying width, in places narrowing down to leave barely room for river and road, and then opens out into pretty bits of pasture with groves

of live oak, a few small sycamore saplings, and scattered willows along the rocky river bed. In places the river bed itself is almost obscured by tall brush. The hills on either side are high and steep, and are covered with sage, wild lilac, and grease-wood, with occasional clumps of manzanita, very dense and high on the unexposed slopes. Huge rock piles are found here and there, and enormous boulders rise above the brush, becoming near the summit abrupt ledges of varying height.

On one of these ledges, which appears from the road, 200 feet below, to be two or three boulders piled on top of each other, in a corner formed by natural cleavage of the rock, is an old eagle's nest that was last occupied in 1897, when two young birds were taken from it. A few hundred yards below, an immense ledge, forming the whole face of the hill, rises above the brush and trees at about 150 feet above the river, extending upwards for perhaps an equal distance as smooth rock-faces, jutting boulders, and moss-covered terraces, with an extreme length of



UPPER EGG, WESTERN RED-TAILED HAWK; MIDDLE, AND LOWER,  
GOLDEN EAGLE

about 200 yards. On the lower part of this, and about fifty feet from the bottom, are two nests. One of these nests is above and a little to the left of the other,

and so close that one can nearly reach the upper while standing in the lower nest.

The upper nest is on a projecting spur of rock, and was built in 1902 but never occupied; the lower is in a corner formed by natural cleavage, and it is an immense structure of sticks, grass, Spanish bayonet, and cornstalks—a very old nest, but until this year long unoccupied.

Ever since 1898 I have made three or four trips to these nests each spring at intervals of two or three weeks, but although birds were frequently seen, all my efforts were fruitless until March 12th of this year, when my patience and perseverance had their reward, and I had the very great pleasure of taking from the lower nest of the two a set of eggs which I believe to be the largest eagle's eggs on record. This was the first time eagles (*Aquila chrysaetos*) had nested in the canyon since 1897. It was evident that they were in the vicinity for at least one was near by on every trip that I made, but always high in air and generally to the southward.

My first trip to "Spook" Canyon this year was later than usual. No birds were seen in the vicinity, and the nests appeared as usual. I had carried a big coil of rope up the hill to the first and back again, and had commenced the ascent of the ledge to the others with reluctance, fully prepared for my usual disappointment, but this time the Fates were with me. When I was within a few feet of the lower nest, only separated from it by a projecting ledge of rock which hid it from view, there was a wild flutter of wings, and the biggest and blackest eagle that I ever saw sailed out from almost under my nose and glided away across the canyon. It is quite pleasing to have little surprises like that when one crawling up a slippery, moss-covered ledge, but that sort of surprise did not trouble me much. The eggs were a greater and more interesting one, and in another minute I was sitting in the nest chuckling to myself over my find, and wondering what the eagle would do if she returned. But she left me in peace, and it is perhaps fortunate for some of us that our Aquilan friends do not come back to us at times.

The eggs seemed pretty large to me while I was packing them, but it was not until they were placed beside others of my series that I realized how much beyond the average they were in size. I can find no published record of anything at all approximating them, and measurements that I have been able to obtain of large eggs in the collections of many well-known ornithologists fall far short of their dimensions. Abnormal eggs are not so common even among the smaller birds as to be uninteresting, and among the Raptores they are rare—seemingly less so, however, among the eagles (*Aquila*) for with them one egg much larger than the others in a set is rather frequently met with, but for both eggs to be of abnormal size is rare indeed.

Major Bendire and Mr. Davie give the average size of the egg of the golden eagle as about 2.93 by 2.30 inches. The largest set of which I have been able to obtain measurements out of about 300 sets in the collections of Messrs. C. W. Crandall, J. L. Childs, A. M. Ingersoll, A. W. Johnson, J. B. Preston, A. E. Price, William Steinbeck, and H. R. Taylor, and in my own series, is a remarkable shaped set in the collection of Mr. A. W. Johnson, taken in Spain, and measuring 3.26 by 2.34, and 3.23 by 2.34 inches respectively. Mr. Johnson also informs me that he has a record of a Scotch taken egg, now in England, measuring 3.26 by 2.55 inches. These three eggs and one in a set of two in Mr. Price's collection measuring 3.23 by 2.44 inches, are the largest eggs I have so far heard of, and they are the only ones that exceed 3.20 inches in length.

Mr. Johnson, whose large series contains besides his California sets, many from Scotland, Spain, Lapland, Bulgaria and other countries, writes me that he finds an egg that measures 3.10 in length very large. Eggs above 3.15 are very except-

ional. I am quite able to agree with him, for in the large series that I have referred to I have found only twenty-two eggs that measured 3.10 or more in length, and of those, fifteen exceeded 3.15, four of these going beyond 3.20 inches. From these data the mammoth proportions of my eggs may perhaps be better appreciated. They measure 3.47 by 2.62, and 3.37 by 2.64 inches. Plain figures, while doubtless plain facts, are less readily digested than a more tangible object lesson, so I have included in a photograph for comparison, a large egg of a western red-tailed hawk, measuring 2.52 by 2.00, an average golden eagle's egg measuring 2.97 by 2.23, and the larger of my large set measuring 3.47 by 2.62. From the photograph and measurements, it will be seen that the large eagle's egg is as much larger than the average as that is larger than a red-tail's egg.

In coloration, as appears in the photograph, the larger egg is the more lightly marked. The markings appear more as ingrained shell markings of faint lavender and umber, giving the egg the appearance of having a very dirty white ground color. There are a few superficial spots and small splashes of a darker shade. The smaller egg is very handsome, the markings being of a much brighter tint, making the ground appear brighter and clearer by contrast. As shown in the photograph, the markings are heavier at the small end. At the large end the markings are all nearly confluent but very faint in shade, and have more the appearance of shell markings. The intermediate blotches and splashes are very bright. In both eggs the shell is very smooth, with few granulations. Incubation had just commenced and was equal in both eggs.

One naturally wonders why there should be so much difference between these eggs and others taken from the same nests and presumably the product of the same birds. A set of two taken from a "series of five" nests occupied by this pair of birds, are about average eggs, measuring 2.97 by 2.23 and 2.93 by 2.24 inches. The larger is the central egg in the photograph. The markings are strongly defined blotches and spots of a dark reddish brown and almost wholly at the larger end, no lavender shade appearing anywhere. The other egg is absolutely unmarked.

The "Spook" Canyon bird was unusually dark seeming almost black, and very large—in fact the largest and blackest eagle I ever saw, and in perfect plumage. I had a good view of her when she left the nest for I was not five feet from her. Then after I had left the nest and was on the ground below not more than fifty feet away she did what no eagle of my acquaintance ever did before, came back to the nest and settled down on it again with head up watching me and making a curious clucking, like the common call of the Cooper hawk, which she repeated a dozen times.

*Escondido, California.*

#### An Ornithological Comparison of the Pajaro Valley in California with Sioux County in Nebraska

BY J. S. HUNTER

DURING the summer of 1903 I was located in the Pajaro valley in Santa Cruz county, and it was with great interest that I compared ornithological conditions there, with those in Sioux county in northwest Nebraska.

Sioux county is bordered on the north by South Dakota and on the west by



Wyoming. While the region is not mountainous the flora and fauna certainly tend toward mountainous forms. On the whole it is perhaps the most interesting section of the state for bird work. Nearly every summer a party of Nebraska bird people spend some little time there in studying bird life and collecting bird skins. As yet, however, owing to the distance from the center of ornithological activities the region has not been thoroughly worked. With the exception of two weeks in February of 1896 the work done has been confined to late spring and early summer time, thus leaving nearly all of the spring and all of the fall migrations unrecorded. When these and also the winter residents are thoroughly known it is safe to say that the geographical range of many species will be extended and that a number of species will be added to the already large Nebraska list.

The topography of the section is peculiar. Hat Creek valley, which comprises a large part of the county, is bordered on the south and west by high bluffs, and is about one hundred miles across. During the summer it is about as dry and hot a place as one would care to be in. Except along the almost dry water courses there is scarcely any vegetation to be seen. The geological formation in some parts of the valley is much like that of the famous Bad Lands of South Dakota. In the section on the northwest side there is considerable sage-brush and other vegetation. In the dryer parts the common birds are the Say phoebe and the Arkansas kingbird. In the sage-brush section bird life is more numerous; good sized bands of sharp-tailed grouse and an occasional bunch of sage grouse will be seen. Other species, in all about thirty, make their homes there. As we come nearer to the bluffs the entire nature of the country changes; the streams are rather thickly bordered with shrubs and other plants, water flows the year through, and bird life also becomes more abundant. As we follow one of the little creeks into the canyon from which it emerges we are more and more impressed by the entire change of the surroundings. The walls of the canyon tower in places almost perpendicularly 500 feet, and where not too steep they are covered with a scattering growth of yellow pine, the fallen leaves of which cover the ground so thickly that it is exceedingly difficult to climb the side of the canyon. The bottom of the canyon is filled with a dense growth of trees and under-brush, and if it were not for an occasional path, traveling there would be very difficult. The trees are very similar in species to those found throughout the canyon region of the Rocky Mountains and comprise such forms as the quaking asp, juniper, poplar, black birch and many others that need not be listed. After following the many turns of the stream for three or four miles the summit of the bluffs is reached, and again the flora changes. The ground is covered with a thick growth of range grass; no bushes nor trees can be seen except a pine or two at the head of the canyon. Looking backward we see below us the dry, parched, Hat Creek valley extending as far as the eye can see toward the north and in the far distance can be discerned the faint blue line of the Black Hills over a hundred miles away.

By those who know California Coast Range conditions it will be seen that only in respect to the canyons are the two localities similar. The Hat Creek valley corresponds to the fertile Pajaro Valley so famous in the state. The vegetation is entirely different; redwoods replace pines and many other plants are just as different. Climatic conditions are also very different; in Nebraska it is not uncommon for the temperature to drop as low as 40 degrees below zero, in the Pajaro valley 20 degrees above zero is about as cold as it ever gets. But let us look at the bird life.

In this comparison I have included only those birds on which I have secured notes. The California list covers a much longer time than that of Nebraska, from



April 20 to December 1. The list for the former place includes 106 species and for the latter 103. There are 45 species that are common to both regions. These are the mourning dove, turkey vulture, marsh hawk, sharp-shinned hawk, Cooper hawk, Swainson hawk, Ferruginous rough-leg hawk, golden eagle, sparrow hawk, burrowing owl, kingfisher, Cabanis woodpecker, Lewis woodpecker, Red-shafted flicker, dusky poor-will, white-throated swift, Arkansas kingbird, Say phoebe, western wood pewee, common crow, western meadowlark, Bullock oriole, Brewer blackbird, Pine siskin, western lark sparrow, western chipping sparrow, Lincoln sparrow, black-headed grosbeak, lazuli bunting, western tanager, cliff swallow, barn swallow, tree swallow, violet-green swallow, cedar waxwing, western warbling vireo, Cassin vireo, yellow warbler, Tolmie warbler, long-tailed chat, western mockingbird, rock wren, russet-backed thrush, western robin. Some of these are more abundant in one region than in the other. The white-throated swift is one of the most noticeable birds in Sioux county. I saw the bird only once in Santa Cruz county. The numbers of individuals of the species of swallows is greater in Santa Cruz county. Many of the species are found at different times of the year in the two localities. The Say phoebe is one of these, for in Sioux county it is a rather common breeder while in Santa Cruz it is a winter resident. The western tanager, Audubon warbler, western robin, and a few others are birds of this sort. Most of the species spend the winter in Santa Cruz county but only those that are able to resist the severe cold stay in Sioux county. Occasionally however where owing to the constant seepage of water the ground does not freeze the Wilson snipe may be found all winter.

As to species the gallinaceous birds are better represented in Sioux county; the bob-white, prairie sharp-tailed grouse, and sage hen are all found there. None of them are so common as is the California quail in Santa Cruz county. The band-tailed pigeon is not found in Nebraska. Some years it is very common in the Pajaro valley, so I am told, but last year the species was rather rare. The condor, white-tailed kite, duck hawk, barn owl, long-eared owl, and California screech owl were recorded in Santa Cruz county. Some of them undoubtedly occur in Sioux county but were not seen there. The western red-tailed hawk is replaced there by the Krider hawk, and the Pacific horned owl by the western horned owl. The barred owl's characteristic hoot is often heard in Sioux county but not in Santa Cruz. The prairie falcon although occurring in Santa Cruz county was not seen during the summer, in Sioux county. This is due to the fact that the country is thinly settled and the birds have a chance to live undisturbed.

The order Coccoyges is represented by different species in the two localities; in Nebraska there are the yellow and black-billed cuckoo; the road-runner and California cuckoo do not occur there.

One of the most conspicuous woodpeckers in Sioux county is the red-headed, which is replaced in California by the California woodpecker. None of the smaller members of the genus *Dryobates* have been noted in Sioux county, but in Santa Cruz the willow woodpecker is common.

The Macrochires are stronger on small species in California and on large species in Nebraska. Two hummingbirds, the Anna and rufous, are common in Santa Cruz county but are not found in Sioux county; neither does the Vaux swift occur there. The nighthawk on the other hand is very common.

The most common flycatcher in Sioux county is the Say phoebe, while the black phoebe is the most common in Santa Cruz. This and the western flycatcher

are California species and do not occur in Sioux county. The Acadian and alder flycatcher are eastern forms that are found there.

The form of the horned lark as would be supposed is different in the two sections, the desert horned lark being the common form in Sioux county and the Mexican horned lark in Santa Cruz.

The yellow-billed magpie of California has much the same habits as its eastern relative the black-billed, but it is not so abundant and consequently seems much wilder. Instead of the harsh call of the California jay or the rattle of the coast jay, in Sioux county the more musical croak of the pinyon jay is heard, while an occasional eastern blue jay is to be seen endeavoring to make the other birds know that he is there to jolly up the hawks and owls. Once in a while a Clarke crow may be seen perched on the top of some tall pine. Rarely also the common crow will be seen winging its way across the canyon in search of better feeding grounds, and although it is quite uncommon in the Pajaro valley, it is more abundant than in Sioux county. That bird parasite, the cowbird, is common in Sioux county, and fortunately for the other birds it is not so in California. The bronzed grackle is an eastern bird without a California relative, but the red-wing of the east is represented by the bicolored black-bird.

The family Fringillidæ is largely represented by different species in the two localities. The Santa Cruz birds are the purple finch, linnet, Arkansas goldfinch, intermediate, Nuttall, and golden-crowned sparrows, Point Pinos junco, Santa Cruz song sparrow, California, and spurred towhees. The Sioux county species are the American goldfinch, McCown longspur, western vesper, Baird, and western grasshopper sparrows, white-winged junco, mountain song sparrow, Arctic towhee, dickcissel, and the lark bunting. It is likely that the intermediate, and golden-crowned sparrows occur in Sioux county during their migrations as they are common further east.

The warblers and vireos are well represented in the two sections; the western warbling vireo, Pacific yellow-throat, and the Calaveras, Townsend, pileolated, and black-throated gray warblers are Santa Cruz species, while the plumbeous, and red-eyed vireos, the western yellow-throat and the Tennessee, and yellow-rumped warblers, and the redstart are Sioux county forms. One of the most interesting variations in the warblers is the fact that the Audubon warbler which is so common a winter resident in the Pajaro valley is a rather common breeder in Sioux county.

The remaining birds that were found in Santa Cruz county were the western martin, California shrike, American pipit, California thrasher, the Vigors, western winter, and tule wrens, California creeper, plain-tit, Barlow chickadee, intermediate wren-tit, bush tit, ruby-crowned kinglet, western gnatcatcher, hermit thrush, varied thrush, and the western bluebird. Those in Sioux county are the white-rumped shrike, brown thrasher, catbird, western house wren, slender-billed nuthatch, Townsend solitaire, wood thrush, eastern robin, eastern bluebird and the mountain bluebird.

The best singers of both regions are found in these last two bunches. Perhaps the best California one is the California thrasher but I do not think that it equals either the brown thrasher, the catbird, or the Townsend solitaire which are all rather common in the Nebraska region.

*Berkeley, California.*

## FROM FIELD AND STUDY

**The Texas Kingfisher at New Braunfels, Texas.**—While spending a Sunday at Landa's Park, New Braunfels last June I observed a pair of these rare kingfishers (*Ceryle americana septentrionalis*) flying about in search of food. While enjoying a boat ride on the lake, I had a good opportunity to observe them. They were always in sight and were constantly uttering their curious call-note, which somewhat resembles the notes of the common kingfisher. Presently one alighted on a dead pecan tree on the margin of the lake and I cautiously approached so as to get a better view, but before I had gotten within viewing distance it was off, and soon again was seen flying down the lake with its mate. This species is considerably smaller than the common kingfisher and is very rare in this locality except at New Braunfels near the springs in Landa's Park. I have never found this species breeding but I am inclined to believe that it still breeds in Comal county, Texas.—A. E. SCHUTZE, *Austin, Texas.*

**The Inca Dove in Central Texas.**—On account of the long droughts that have occurred throughout southwest Texas for the past few years, many birds have suffered considerably from scarcity of food and water. For long years the Inca dove (*Scardafella inca*) or Mexican dove, as it is often called, was confined to a region between San Antonio and the Rio Grande and southward into Mexico. Bexar county was perhaps the northern limit in Texas.

On account of the continued droughts, this dove, as well as many other species of birds moved north and eastward to a country where they found food and water in abundance. In Comal county, especially at New Braunfels, they are now plentiful, where but a few years ago they had never been seen. They are also quite common in Travis county. The first birds that I observed near Austin, were seen in the fall of 1902 when I unexpectedly came upon a flock of five. They were feeding together on the side of a hill and showed no fear at my presence. Only one nest has so far been found north of Comal county. This was found in a small bush in Caldwell county and contained two fresh eggs. Last summer I made several trips to New Braunfels, Comal county where I found this diminutive dove in abundance. They were confined to the city and not a single individual was seen in the immediate vicinity. No nests were discovered, but I was told by a resident that they had nested abundantly the previous spring.

Like the common dove, they are residents. After the breeding season they form small flocks and can usually be found feeding together in a shady ravine or grove. They are rapidly increasing in numbers and probably in a few years they will be as abundant as the common dove. They are slowly moving northward and have also been observed as far east as College Station.—A. E. SCHUTZE, *Austin, Texas.*

**Northern Flicker at Auburn, California.**—Dr. R. F. Rooney has sent the writer a wing of *Colaptes auratus luteus*. The bird was taken by his son on the outskirts of Auburn, California, October 3, 1904. Dr. Rooney says it is the first specimen he has seen on the Pacific coast during a residence of twenty-seven years. Auburn is a rather southern station although, as stated in Grinnell's check-list, "*auratus*" has been recorded as far south as Warm Springs, San Diego county.—WALTER K. FISHER.

**The Destruction of Bird Life by Light Towers.**—Hundreds if not thousands of birds lose their lives yearly, by coming in contact with the light towers of the city of Austin. There are thirty-four of these towers, 150 feet in height, built entirely of steel, and held in place by stout wires or iron ropes. At the top of each are suspended six large globes or arc lamps which make a very brilliant light. During the fall and spring migrations the birds encounter a great difficulty when passing over this city at night. They are attracted by the lights from the towers and begin to fly about in great confusion. The light is so strong that when they come within a certain distance they are temporarily blinded at which time so many lose their lives. They begin to fly about in all directions and not being able to see they strike the steel tower with such great force that they fall to the ground, with perhaps a broken wing, crushed body or shattered head. Warblers, sparrows, thrushes and other small birds that fly at night are the principal victims. Ducks, geese, plover and other water fowl suffer considerably. I have often been awakened at night by the screaming geese that had been betrayed by the light. In some instances the birds were so stupefied that they flew around the light for hours in great confusion. During storms the birds are more easily attracted. Martins have also suffered since the towers were erected. When they arrive from the south their first stopping place is invariably the light tower, where after a few days of noisy courtship they begin to build their homes in the suspended globes. The towers are cleaned daily and consequently the nests are destroyed. After the great dam and power house was destroyed at Austin, in April 1900, the towers were neglected for several months. The martins became aware of this fact and many built their nests in the globes. The

birds entered from the top as this was the only opening large enough to admit them. All went well until the young were able to leave the nest. But now how to get out? They had never gone through the upper passage and therefore did not know the route to the outer world. The old birds diligently fed and cared for their broods that were rapidly growing in size, when finally they became aware of their folly and gave up in despair. The young were left to their own fate. The globes in which the nests were situated are transparent and are 150 feet above the ground. The young could see the green world below, hear the twitter of other birds that were flying about and yet they were unable to leave their confinement. The old birds could be seen flying about, in distress throughout the day and unable to give any relief. Now imagine the miserable deaths these poor little creatures met.

After a new power plant had been erected men were ordered to clean the towers and make all necessary repairs. On one occasion I saw an electrician take six full grown young from a single globe, besides many individuals out of the others. This is probably one instance out of a hundred that shows how bird life is affected as civilization advances. The scissor-tailed flycatcher often builds its nest on the cross bars of the towers.—A. E. SCHUTZ, *Austin, Texas*.

## MINUTES OF MEETINGS

**JULY.**—The July meeting was held July 9, at the residence of H. R. Taylor, Alameda. Eleven members and ten visitors were present, and President Taylor occupied the chair. Three new active members were elected, viz., Messrs. Walter Dean, L. Stejneger, and S. F. Rathbun. Communications from Mr. William Brewster and Dr. Jonathan Dwight, Jr. were read, and five persons were proposed for membership, viz., Miss E. F. Kuhls, and Messrs. A. H. Snow, H. C. Oberholser, R. H. Johnson, and C. H. Rose. Mr. W. K. Fisher was appointed chairman of the Information Committee. Mr. Emerson spoke on "The Identification of Birds in the Field," and two papers were also presented one by Mr. Mailliard, "California Jays and Cats," and one by Mrs. Florence Merriam Bailey, "A Dusky Grouse and her Brood in New Mexico." The authors not being present the papers were read by the Secretary and by Mr. Fisher. Meeting adjourned to meet at San Anselmo, Sept. 10, 1904.

**SEPTEMBER.**—The September meeting was held at the residence of H. H. Sheldon, San Anselmo, Sept. 10. The small attendance was noticeable, only five members and two visitors being present. Mr. Grinnell occupied the chair in the absence of Mr. Taylor. Five new members were elected, as follows: Miss Elsa F. Kuhls, Messrs. A. H. Snow, H. C. Oberholser, R. H. Johnson, and C. H. Rose. Mr. J. Proctor was proposed for membership. Mr. Grinnell addressed the Club regarding the financial condition of THE CONDOR. He informed the Club that it was in a most satisfactory condition, and that the year would close with a small balance on hand. Mr. Johnson's paper "Notes on Unusual Nesting Sites of the Pacific Yellow-throat," was read by Mr. Grinnell, and Mr. Thompson spoke on "The Anatidae of Morro Bay." The Club then adjourned to meet in Oakland, Nov. 5, 1904.

**NOVEMBER.**—The Club met Nov. 5 at the home of Miss Helen Swett, Oakland. Nineteen members and seven visitors were present, and President Taylor occupied the chair. The order of business was reversed and the program was immediately proceeded to. Mr. Seale gave a most interesting address on the "Birds of the South Seas," and Mr. Taylor read Mr. Silloway's paper "Notes from Flathead 1904." Business was then taken up, and Mr. J. W. Procter, Stanford University, was elected to active membership. The following were proposed for membership: Messrs. H. H. Elbert, Stanford University; P. J. Fair, Palo Alto; W. A. Bryan, Honolulu; E. S. Currier, Tacoma, Washington; C. P. Smith, Palo Alto; and Dr. E. A. Mearns, Washington, D. C.

The following were nominated as officers for 1905: president, Joseph Mailliard; senior vice-president, Miss Helen Swett; junior vice-pres., J. O. Snyder; secretary, Charles S. Thompson; treasurer, Joseph Grinnell.

Mr. Fisher proposed that the January meeting should be held at some restaurant in San Francisco, and the members present voted unanimously that the annual meeting should be held at such restaurant as should be decided upon by the committee appointed for that purpose by Pres. Taylor. The Club approved Mr. Fisher's action in placing the magazines and books of the Club in the Barbara Jordan Ornithological Library at Stanford University.

Adjourned to meet in San Francisco, January 14, 1905.

CHARLES S. THOMPSON, Secretary.

## THE CONDOR

An Illustrated Magazine of Western  
Ornithology

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WALTER K. FISHER, Editor, Palo Alto  
JOSEPH GRINNELL, Business Manager and  
Associate Editor, Pasadena  
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### NOTES AND NEWS

At the regular meeting held in Oakland, November 5, the following nominations were made for officers for 1905: president, Mr. Joseph Mailliard; first vice-president, Miss Helen Swett; second vice-president, Prof. J. O. Snyder; treasurer and business manager, Mr. Joseph Grinnell; secretary, Mr. Chas. S. Thompson.

With this issue volume six is completed. Club members and subscribers will confer a great favor if they remit their dues or subscriptions promptly to the business manager. We have some plans for further improving *THE CONDOR*, and any great delay on the part of our constituents in remembering the year-end obligation is a trifle embarrassing—to us at least.

In his review of the July *Auk* in October *Bird-Lore*, Dr. J. Dwight, Jr. takes exception to the admittance of 'Baird sparrow' and 'Virginia warbler' to the pages of the *Auk*, instead of the possessive case being used. "Evolution," writes Dr. Dwight, "may some day eliminate the 's' as unfit, but except in geography it is still customary to write English as 'she is wrote.'" Undoubtedly the omission of the possessive form in personal names, given in the sense of dedication, will long remain a matter of personal opinion and preference. Dr. Dwight is in error, however, in supposing that the elimination of the possessive is restricted to geographical names. Some botanists, at least, employed the form before it was introduced into ornithology, and such names as Douglas spruce, Torrey pine, Fraser fir, Jeffrey pine, Parry pinyon, Sargent palm, Bebb willow, Bartram oak, and others *ad libitum* are now in current use. As has often been stated, the sparrow was dedicated to Spencer F. Baird, and the use of his name was never meant to express or imply any proprietary

rights over the species or the individuals thereof. If it is proper and natural to omit the possessive form in the case of mountains, rivers, trees and flowers, is it not logical to extend the usage to birds and other animals? It was this fact, and a desire to write English as 'she is wrote,' that influenced this journal to advocate a general adoption of the non-possessive form, shortly after Dr. Merriam introduced it into ornithological literature, in North American Fauna No. 16 (1899). At any rate it is perhaps interesting to consider how differently two persons may interpret the same text.

Through the kindness of Dr. Jordan the Club has been granted the privilege of placing its books and magazines on the shelves of the Barbara Jordan Library of Ornithology at Stanford University. This library, which is dedicated to the memory of Barbara Jordan "who knew and loved the birds," occupies one of the rooms on the first floor of the new Zoology building. The room is perfectly lighted and is provided with numerous working tables, while along one side are the handsomely carved book shelves. In the center of these, above, is a bronze tablet of dedication, with a family of quails in bas-relief. Immediately below is a cabinet containing Barbara Jordan's collection of birds. The room is used by advanced students of ornithology, and is one of the pleasantest in the splendid new building.

The annual meeting, January 14, will be somewhat different from those of former years, in that it will be held in one of the good restaurants of San Francisco. The Club will have a large room to itself and it is hoped that, in view of the occasion and place, a goodly number of our members will make a special effort to attend. We will convene for dinner at 8 and afterwards have the annual meeting and social good time. Probably it will be advisable to have a short business meeting before the dinner. Members will be notified about two or three weeks before the meeting and will be asked to respond whether they intend to be present. The committee earnestly desires that members cooperate to make this "the best meeting yet."

Although all the returns are not yet in it seems probable that the amendment to the Constitution of California, exempting the California Academy of Sciences from taxation, has received a majority of favorable votes.

In volume six there are seventy halftone illustrations which is a substantial gain over forty-three in volume five and thirty-two in volume four. The majority of illustrations during the past year have been such that we can point to them with pardonable pride. But just watch for the January number!

The Twenty-second Congress of the American Ornithologists' Union will convene in Cambridge, Mass., on Tuesday, November 29, 1904, at 10 o'clock A. M. The meetings will be held in the Nash Lecture room, University Museum, Oxford Street.

Mr. William L. Finley has gone east to attend the meeting.



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